

Rethinking Feedback

Putting Value into Online Learning

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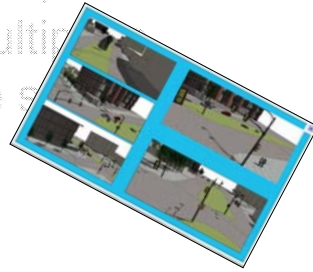
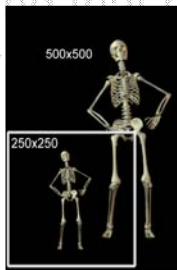


“Doing something to add value to ~~an~~
~~organization~~ is good, but doing
something that multiplies value is
better and more scalable.”

~Tony Hsieh
Ceo, Zappos.com



Doing something to add value to
online education is good, but



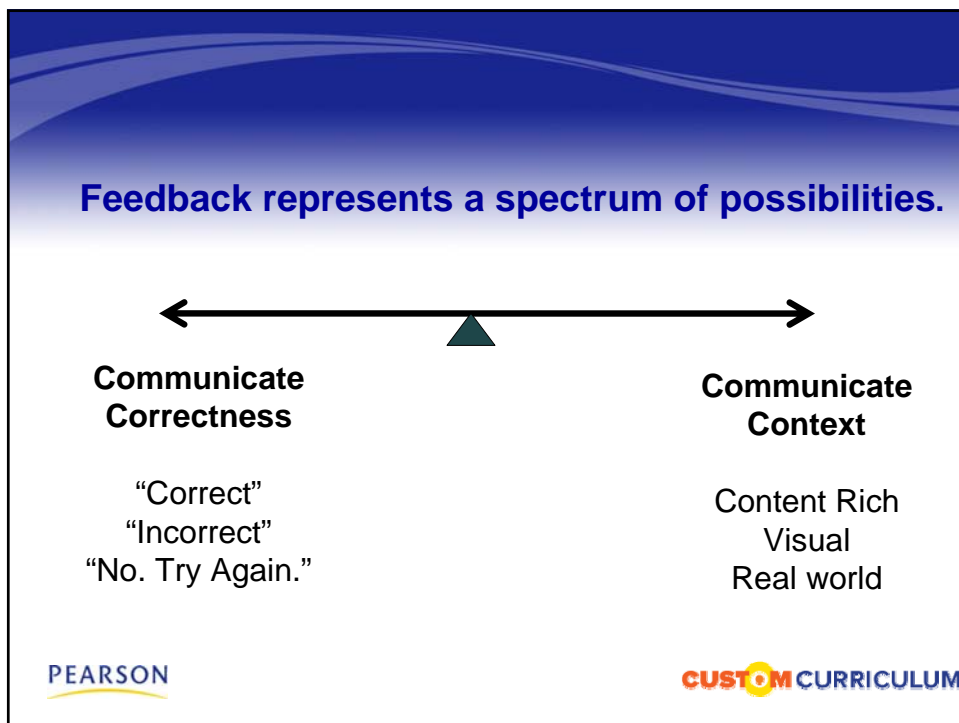
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Feedback represents a spectrum of possibilities.

Providing the right kind of feedback to learners can make a significant difference in their achievement.

A few questions we will want to consider...

- **Why do learners need feedback?**
- **What kind of feedback do learners need and want?**
- **How much and often is enough when giving feedback?**
- **How can we ensure that the feedback we give is taken seriously?**
- **How can we incorporate feedback effectively in our online classes?**

Why do learners need feedback?

Without knowing how they are performing in reference to the learning outcomes of the course, the student has no means by which to gauge their progress, nor modify their performance to improve their success.

Why do learners need feedback?

Feedback helps students...

- Evaluate their own knowledge
- Identify their strengths and weaknesses
- Understand expectations
- Make continual adjustments to improve their performance
- Increase Interest and motivation to learn

Why do learners need feedback?



"How can I move forward if I don't know which way I'm facing?"

Why do learners need feedback?



If we are in a position to give feedback to others, we need to not only help them know which way is forward, but also to use the information that has been given to them.

Why do learners need feedback?

- (1) Telling them clearly what we are looking for,**
- (2) Congratulating them for what they are doing well,**
- (3) Telling them what is wrong, and**
- (4) Suggesting new ways to accomplish their goals.**

Why do learners need feedback?

Because feedback helps learners overcome learning difficulties, it is one of the most important factors in learning and teaching.

Why do learners need feedback?

- Learner did not learn the information in the first place.
- Information was learned incorrectly.
- Learner forgot the information.
- Learner remembered the information incorrectly.

Why do learners need feedback?

Mistakes are typically not random. If we can determine the misconception learners have, we can provide them with better feedback, and help them overcome those specific misconceptions.

What kind of feedback do learners need and want?

The overarching principle of providing students with valuable feedback is to give learners the feedback they need.

What kind of feedback do learners need and want?

- **Timely**
- **Specific**
- **Abundant**
- **Personal**
- **Positive/ Encouraging**
- **Professional**

What kind of feedback do learners need and want?

■ Timely

Good feedback should be timely. The best feedback occurs on a regular basis, not just at the end of an assessment. If done frequently, our comments will seem less like an evaluation, and more like helpful suggestions.

What kind of feedback do learners need and want?

Specific feedback....

- helps students build appropriate mental models of concepts
- doesn't provide extra information
- provides complete information
- doesn't repeat the original content
- doesn't confuse the student with diversions

Question: Why is the word "it's" not grammatically correct in the sentence below?

The dog ate it's food before playing with the ball.

- A. The word "it's" is a possessive pronoun, and food cannot be possessed or owned.
- B. The word "it's" a contraction for "it is" and "it is" does not make sense in the sentence.
- C. The sentence *is* grammatically correct. The word "it's" is correct because the apostrophe indicates that "it's" is a possessive pronoun.

- Incorrect, the word "it's" is not a possessive pronoun.
- Possessive pronouns do not need apostrophes (examples: yours, hers...)
- Sometimes an apostrophe does indicate possession. For example, we could say "The dog's water spilled on the floor." Because the water is possessed or owned by the dog, we use an apostrophe.
- We should also point out that dog is not a pronoun.
- Here is an easy way to remember which to use. The word "it's" is short for "it is" you should use "it's" when you mean "it is" and "its" when you do not mean "it is."

What are your students saying about the feedback their teachers give?

My teachers do not provide feedback.
No one tells me how I am doing, until it is too late.
The comment "Keep up the good work" does not help me.
I get more negative feedback than anything else
The feedback I receive is often vague, inadequate, and non-specific.
I never read the feedback my teacher's give, it's not worth it.

How much and often is enough when giving feedback?

The frequency of feedback in a typical online course is every 5-10 screens, which could equal 15-20 minutes.

In EA games... 1-2 decisions/second, and give feedback on those decisions every 7-10 seconds.

How much and often is enough when giving feedback?



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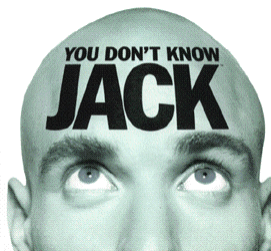
Giving timely, specific, and abundant feedback disrupts the autopilot students experience as they go through an online course.

How can we ensure that the feedback we give is taken seriously?

You...

FAILED

...the assignment.



How can we ensure that the feedback we give is taken seriously?

Learners are inhibited from learning from feedback if they....

- feel unsafe,
- feel the need to defend themselves, and
- are unable to see how to apply the feedback to improve their performance.



How can we ensure that the feedback we give is taken seriously?

Examples of wimpy feedback...

- Good try, but you could have done better.
- I'm sorry, but that is not the best answer.
- Almost. Would you like to try again?
- Oh, too bad.
- Right / Wrong
- Try again



Feedback should be balanced.



The complexity of feedback needs to match
the complexity of the task.

The Discussion Thread/Question

The online teacher plays a crucial role in motivating
students to have an effective discussion.

The Discussion Thread/Question

How dependant on fossil fuels should our society be since they are in limited supply and we cannot make more? Be sure to respond to at least two other posts.

The Discussion Thread/Question

Student's Post

Fossil Fuels should not be a big concern because while the supplies are limited there is still enough to go around.

Teacher's Post

This is too short...to receive full credit you need to have a longer post.

The Discussion Thread/Question

Revised Teacher's Post

Richard, I appreciate the fact that you've responded to this discussion quickly. It's obvious you do not think we will eventually run out of fossil fuels if we continue to use the limited supply. Can you think of another example to support your opinion? Do you have a solution to reduce our societies demand on fossil fuels? I'd really like to hear more about your opinion on the issue. Could you elaborate on your original post for us? Thanks.

The Discussion Thread/Question

Revised Teacher's Post

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The Discussion Thread/Question

Feedback in discussion questions that multiplies value...

- Includes a positive response,
- Asks questions that lead to a deeper level of understanding,
- Makes a personal connection, and
- Makes specific requests.

How can we incorporate feedback effectively in our online classes?

Adapted from *Guides to Offering Effective Feedback in Online Classes*” (Cochran, 2009)

Feedback in online classes needs to be predictable.

A successful online education setting relies on proactive feedback.

How can we incorporate feedback effectively in our online classes?

Adapted from *Guides to Offering Effective Feedback in Online Classes*” (Cochran, 2009)

Feedback in online classes involves peers and achieves socialization.

Constructive feedback in online classes is a two-way street.

Summary

Feedback does not have to be “rocket science.”

It is an objective description of a student's performance intended to guide future performance.

Summary

The outcome of the feedback process should be someone who is not only engaged, but also energized and motivated to increase their performance.

Thank You

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Q&A